

BULLETIN

Temple Sinai Oakland

7 NISAN – 6 IYYAR / APRIL 2020 / ISSUE 146 / OAKLANDSINAI.ORG

Staying Connected

We are thinking of all of you during this challenging time. Please be sure to stay connected to your Temple community. If you need help or support, please contact the Caring Community at caringcommunity@oaklandsinai.org.

Tune into our streaming services on Friday night live on Facebook or any time after on our vimeo page where all of our videos will be available.

Please visit our website, oaklandsinai.org, for the latest virtual gatherings, classes and events to which all of our community members are invited.

May we remain healthy, strong, and connected to one another.



vimeo.com/oaklandsinai



facebook.com/templesinai2808



Passover

All on-site congregational Passover Seders have been canceled. See pages 4 and 5 for some ideas on creating a meaningful passover for you and your family and visit our website for information on virtual ways to learn about and celebrate Passover this year.



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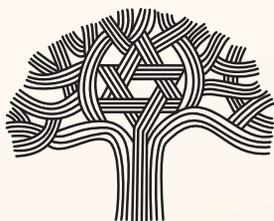
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Friends,

It is an understatement to say that these times feel unprecedented. In most of our lifetimes, we have never faced a global crisis like the one we now collectively face. Even as I write these lines, the “shelter in place” order is about to go into effect for our Bay Area communities, forcing us all into the relative safety and considerable isolation resulting from this drastic public health measure. In these past days and weeks, we have each faced difficult decisions and trying moments we have likely never

contemplated, and through it all I have been drawing strength and comfort from three places: my family and friends, our Sinai community and staff, and our Jewish tradition.

In these days of physical isolation and “social distancing” I am endlessly grateful for my family and friends, even as I worry about the health of these loved ones. Every kind word and shared moment in person or over FaceTime and the phone have been an opportunity to deepen our relationships and affirm how important it is to sustain these bonds.

From the moment we began to reckon with the potential impact the coronavirus might pose to our community, the staff and leadership of our congregation have been tireless and creative in adapting our programs and maintaining the bonds of community that hold us all together. Stepping into the gap of uncertainty, members of our community have risen to the challenge every day to support the most vulnerable in our community and lift the spirits of fellow members. Every day we are learning that the physical distances that separate our homes can be bridged by acts of the heart and moments of compassion. We continue to learn each day how we can each be present for one another without sharing the same space, and I invite you to be our partners in this collective effort.

As I've sought perspective and guidance from our tradition to face this difficult time, I have been focused on the story of Passover and the Exodus. This year our Seders will most assuredly be different from all other Seders, and so I hope the following two inspirations from our tradition will bring you comfort in this time of distress.

- **In the Book of Deuteronomy (chapter 21)**, we learn about the practice of coming before the priest with the annual harvest of the first fruits. When one brought that offering to the Temple, he recited the verses we now quote in the Passover Haggadah: “My father was a wandering Aramean...” Many generations after the Exodus itself, and even to our own days, the recitation of this verse—and indeed, the practice of the Seder itself—served as a way to place ourselves in the story and the redemptive experience of the Exodus. No matter if we trace our Jewish roots back generations or we find ourselves around a Seder table for the first time, we are empowered to see ourselves as part of the chain of tradition that has carried the Jewish people through the millennia. As we gather around for Seder this year (in person or virtually), may we draw strength from those who came before us and transcended times of incredible struggle to bring us to this day.
- **As part of the Hallel (Psalm verses of praise)**, we recite and sing the poignant words, “Min hameitzar karati Yah, Anani bamerchav Yah” (In distress I called out to the Eternal, God answered me and brought me relief, Psalm 118:5). Much has been written about the word Meitzar or ‘distress’ and how similar it is to the word Mitzrayim or Egypt. But more importantly, I am now coming to realize that I have never fully understood these words in their full meaning before. Because the other common translation and interpretation of that Hebrew word Meitzar is ‘narrow-place,’ and despite facing my share of trials and tribulation in life, I have never found myself in a narrow-place quite like the one we now collectively face. Our ancestors knew the stricture of confinement and bondage and knew how to celebrate its release. Looking forward to the moment when the boundaries of this confinement are lifted from us, I pray that we truly learn to celebrate our lives and the open expanses that we rarely have cause to notice until they are gone.

May we continue to draw strength from one another, and may this be a time of redemption and freedom for us all,

Rabbi Yoni Regev

Social Action in Action

Every Monday, volunteers from Temple Sinai and First Presbyterian Church prepare and serve a free hot lunch. Here are life stories of some regular attendees that they have met.

- O, a 55 year-old African-American man, grew up in Oakland, the youngest of 8 children raised by a single mother. He was homeless for 1½ years after losing everything in a fire 3 years ago in the apartment he had occupied for 12 years. He has some shelter now but struggles with the high cost of living in Oakland. Helping out at the church makes him feel better about himself.



Teri Bleckner and O.

- J, 47, grew up in a Bay Area suburb. He studied science and music in college but dropped out and is dealing with mental health issues. He lived in Christian transitional housing and a group home in Oakland but is now homeless. He sings in his church choir and originally came to First Presbyterian to play the piano.
- 88 year-old S was born in China to a wealthy family that lost everything after the 1940 revolution. She studied mining at a university and worked in a factory for 33 years. In 1989, she and her husband immigrated to the U.S. where 3 of their 4 daughters were in college. Because of the language barrier, she was only able to get jobs as a caregiver for older women. Her husband, a professional in China, worked as a janitor. After 60 years of marriage, he died last year, suffering from Alzheimer's his last 4 years during which S was his primary caregiver. Although caring for him was difficult, she misses him very much.
- Originally from New York, 63 year-old D moved to San Francisco in 1980. He worked as a waiter at the Clift Hotel and then as a city gardener from 1995-2006. He lost his apartment because his partner was a drug addict. He's been homeless the last 2 years, in and out of shelters, sometimes sleeping on the streets, staying in hotels when he has money. He is struggling to find sustainable housing. Because he has celiac disease and is HIV positive, he needs a kitchen to prepare his own food. He comes all the way from San Francisco to First Presbyterian because he enjoys the good food and the donated clothing.

There are many other needs in Oakland that volunteers can help address. Watch for the May bulletin or contact SinaiSocialAction@OaklandSinai.org for ideas and assistance getting started.

People of the Book Literacy Project

Thank you for the Gift of Reading

Thank you to all TSDPP families for their wonderful Tu B'Shevat book drive, which brought us 133 beautiful books! Preschoolers decorated a book box, collected books, and then sorted and counted them for us. We are



grateful to all families who contributed books, as well as to Anne Marie Levy, who organized the drive.

Thanks to these generous families, we were able to give 100 books to Habitot Museum, which will give a book to each at-risk young child who visits during their community outreach hours. Other books will go to our partner schools.

Temple Sinai Community Events

Temple Sinai Blood Drive

Sunday, April 26, 8:00am – 1:00pm, Stern Hall

There is no mitzvah more important than saving a life.

For that reason Temple Sinai is conducting a blood drive in Temple Sinai's Stern Hall on Sunday morning, April 26. If you're a blood donor or would like to become one, please consider signing up for this very important mitzvah. Email phil@legalmaster.com and he'll send you the link or go to oaklandsinai.org.

Co-sponsored by the Ritual Committee, the Fine Arts Committee on Culture and Community, and the Pipe Organ Restoration Committee.

Sign Up Now for Summer Pop-Up Shabbat Dinners!

Only 4 lovely dinners this coming summer season, so sign up quickly to reserve your spot! Contact Joanne Rocklin at jrocklin@mac.com to sign up!

June 26 — Oakland, near the Rose Garden, 10 guests, 1 small dog, accessible.

July 24 — GRANDPARENTS OF PRESCHOOLERS! Montclair, 10 guests, no perfume. The hosts are inviting other grandparents of pre-schoolers to share experiences and tips for enriching that relationship over a shared Shabbat dinner! (note: there are about 8 steps to get into the home).

August 14 — Lake Merritt area, 6 guests, one cat, street parking only, no stairs.

August 28 — Oakmore section of Oakland, 8 guests, small dog. Only 2 stairs.

What Do You Know About Passover Music?

By Rachel Wetstein, Reprinted from ReformJudaism.org

Here are eight questions to engage you and your family in the eight days of Passover. Listen to the Passover songs at www.oaklandsinai.org/music-songs_of_joy.html

- “The Song of the Sea” — the biblical Passover song which the Israelites sang after safely crossing the Sea of Reeds and evading Pharaoh’s army — is unprecedented in the Bible because:**
 - It is the first song to appear in the Bible
 - It is the first biblical song to praise God
 - It is the first biblical instance of using musical instruments
 - All of the above
- In the original Hebrew text of the song “Echad Mi Yodea (Who Knows One?),” the “who knows two” verse refers to the two tablets of the law. In the Ladino version of the song, called Quien Supiense, to what/whom does “who knows two” refer?**
 - Moses and Aaron
 - Two Shabbat candles
 - Esther and Mordechai
 - The first and second Temples
- The closing Passover seder song, “Chad Gadya (One Kid),” tells the story of a baby goat, which was eaten by a cat, which in turn was bitten by a dog, etc., until the “Holy One” arrives to put an end to the chain of events. The “one kid” has long been thought of as a metaphor for what?**
 - The animals on Noah’s ark
 - The Jewish people
 - The first-born sons of the Israelites
 - There is no metaphor
- Which 19th-century classical composer created a famous oratorio about the Prophet Elijah?**
 - Ludwig van Beethoven
 - Giuseppe Verdi
 - Gustav Mahler
 - Felix Mendelssohn
- Who composed the oratorio “Israel in Egypt,” which recounts the Passover story, complete with graphic descriptions of the plagues?**
 - Johann Sebastian Bach
 - George Frideric Handel
 - Ludwig van Beethoven
 - Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
- Whereas in Ashkenazi homes the seder typically starts with the recitation of Kiddush (blessing over wine), in many Sephardi homes a song is sung before the Kiddush; it lists the order of the seder rituals to come. What is the name of that song?**
 - Hodu Ladonai
 - Kadeish Ur’chatz
 - B’tzeit Yisrael
 - Mah L’cha
- Which American Jewish songwriter composed “Miriam’s Song,” celebrating Miriam the prophet and the women who joined her in song and dance after crossing the Red Sea?**
 - Craig Taubman
 - Josh Nelson
 - Michelle Citrin
 - Debbie Friedman
- Which cantor and star of the Yiddish theater composed his own show-stopping version of “Chad Gadyo,” in which the title words are repeated over and over while the soloist improvises?**
 - Moishe Oysher
 - Moshe Koussevitsky
 - Yossele Rosenblatt
 - Leib Glantz

Quiz Answers 1. D. “The Song of the Sea” is the first song to appear in the Bible, the first to mention God, and the first to use musical instruments (which are mentioned twice before, but not in use). **2. A.** The Ladino version of “Echad Mi Yodea” includes the phrase “dos Moxe y Aron” (“two: Moses and Aaron”), which rhymes with the previous line “tres muestros padres son” (“three are our Patriarchs”). The text features Moses and Aaron, the two main heroes of the Passover story, rather than the two tablets of the Law. **3. B.** In “Chad Gadya,” the “one kid” has long been thought of as a metaphor for the Jewish people, and the other characters in the song as representing other nations besetting Israel during its long history. **4. D.** Felix Mendelssohn (1809–47) created the oratorio “Elijah,” first performed in English in 1846 (a German libretto followed soon thereafter). Although Mendelssohn’s distinguished grandfather Moses was a foremost Jewish philosopher in 18th-century Berlin, it is highly doubtful that Felix, a devout Christian, drew inspiration from Judaism. **5. B.** Handel’s oratorio *Israel in Egypt*, composed almost entirely of selections from the Book of Exodus and the Psalms, premiered in London in April 1739. **6. B.** Listing the 15 parts of the seder, the song “Kadeish Ur’chatz” (literally, “sanctify, wash,” meaning “sanctify the wine, wash the hands”) is often sung to the tune of an old Babylonian chant-like melody. Listen now. **7. D.** Debbie Friedman’s “Miriam’s Song” is frequently sung in schools, synagogues, and camps. **8. A.** Moishe Oysher’s *Chad Gadyo* is a frequent encore selection of many cantors and Jewish choirs.

Passover Mandel Brot

Ingredients

- 3 eggs
- Pinch of salt
- 1 scant cup sugar
- 1 scant cup oil
- ½ cup chopped nuts or 3T poppy seeds
- 1 cup cake meal
- ½ cup + 2t potato starch
- Cinnamon sugar

Directions

Preheat oven to 350°. Beat eggs in a large bowl. Gradually add sugar and oil. Add cake meal, potato starch, and nuts/poppy seeds. Oil a 7 ½ x 12 inch pan (well). Fill pan with batter and place on middle rack in oven. Put a pan of water on bottom rack of oven. Bake for 40 minutes. Cool slightly. Cut lengthwise twice to make three sections and then cut diagonally into about 1 inch slices. Lay flat and return to toast in 400° oven for 10-15 minutes until slightly browned. Sprinkle with cinnamon sugar mixture.

Ideas for Young Children at your Passover Seder

With Passover just around the corner, many of you are getting ready to plan and lead your own seders or are attending seders as well. There are lots of ways to get your children involved in the planning and preparation for a Passover Seder. We also know that having young children “sit through” a seder can feel tricky or even impossible at times. Here are a few ideas for how to involve young children in the preparation for your seder and at the seder itself:

- 1. Preparing for the holiday** – Learn the story of Passover. There are so many great books through PJ Library in addition to Passover playlists and videos.
- 2. Share Your Blessings** – A value of Passover is to support those who are hungry in our community. Create “Blessing Bags” to keep in your car to give to people in need.
- 3. Plan out your seder as a family** – There are a myriad of child-friendly Haggadahs out there to choose from. Look through some of them ahead of time to think about ways to make the seder more interactive and fun! Check out these great ideas about how to engage children at the seder.
- 4. Decorations for your Seder Table** – Create your own version of the burning bush using tissue paper, decorate placemats or namecards for your guests, make puppets of the different characters of the Passover story they can use during the Seder.
- 5. Preparing the foods for the Seder** – Children love to cook and can be great helpers in the kitchen. Invite your child to help make your charoset, put out the parsley, smell the horseradish, peel the hard-boiled eggs, and count the number of matzah to put into the Afkiomen bag. If they are involved in the preparation, they will more likely enjoy the seder.
- 6. Keeping young children engaged during the Seder:** Be sure to feed young children before the seder starts so they aren't hungry, have blocks available for children to build pyramids, provide books, games and puzzles for children to play with during the Seder.
- 7. Act out the story!** During the seder, provide dress-up clothes and props for children to help act out a short, fun, interactive version of the story.

We hope that your Passover holiday is filled with lots of joy, good times with friends and family, and wonderful Seder celebrations! Have a very Happy Passover.

Teen Traditions

Engage your teen by bringing “Moving Traditions” to Your Passover Seder table this year. Read through the ideas below and go to movingtraditions.org/passover for more resources on each topic

Healthy Debate: How This Night Can Be Different

When we come together face-to-face to honestly explore challenging issues, we bring meaning and joy to our lives.

Passover, #MeToo, and a Mirror on Your Seder Plate

Thirty years ago, feminists added Miriam and the midwives to our seders. But this year, to address the #metoo movement and our societal need for deep reckoning around gender, sexuality, and power, it is time to take a step further. Try adding mirrors to our seder plates this year.

We All Make The Seder

The practice in many families is for one person, often a male head of household, to lead the seder. This year, we are thinking about leadership differently than in past traditions. The story of Passover is filled with shared leadership.

Hiding and Finding the Matzah—and Ourselves

Can you recall a time when you discovered something new about yourself—a hidden talent or trait that sets you apart? Why do we sometimes hide who we are, even from ourselves? What makes us feel safe enough to reveal what we've hidden?

With Outstretched Arms

Passover makes us think about the women who made the Exodus possible by standing up for freedom and what is right.

Miriam's Cup

Miriam and Elijah: Two Cups for Your Seder. Add a Miriam's cup to your seder table alongside that of Elijah.

Reeds on the Seder Table

Three Insights from the Tale of a Young Egyptian Woman This Passover, we suggest adding the story of a courageous woman to round out your seder – that of Bat Paro, the daughter of Pharaoh. Adding reeds to the table will recall Bat Paro's spirit and remind us to stand up for what is right.

We Won't Get Fooled Again: Helping Teens Identify Pharaoh

A boy is tricked into being part of a game with other boys only to find out that he is the target of mockery and abuse. A girl is happy to be included as a “friend” at a lunch table until she finds it was only a ploy to get back at another girl. A boy is “hit on” as part of a practical joke. A girl is lured into an unwelcomed physical encounter. Being fooled is one of the many challenges that teens face on a daily basis. The challenge is new – and old.

Reprinted from movingtraditions.org

Giving

Todah rabah! Thank you very much to the following who provided contributions to Temple Sinai. These donations were recorded between January 31 and February 27, 2020. For corrections or additions to this list, please contact rhonda@oaklandsinai.org (510) 451-3263 x303.

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in memory of Rabbi Samuel and Judith Broude

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in memory of Rabbi Samuel and Judith Broude

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in honor of Mike Rancer's birthday

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Birthdays

4/1 Erin Lenhert
 4/4 Judy Grunwald
 4/4 Roger Tinkoff
 4/5 Renee
 Grimani-Kardener
 4/6 Lorin Blum
 4/6 Denise Jacobson
 4/6 Kevin Schwartz
 4/8 Carol Cohen
 4/8 Murray Gordon
 4/9 Edie Kaplan
 4/10 Christopher Coutu
 4/11 David Gould
 4/11 Caryn Palliser
 4/11 Francis
 Julian Montgomery
 4/12 Emily Mendel
 4/12 Frank Silver
 4/14 Arlene Garfinkle
 4/16 Erin Palacios
 4/17 Patricia Golde
 4/17 Skye Corbett
 4/18 Joyce Smail
 4/18 Matthew Fogelson
 4/19 Harvey Freedman
 4/20 Joshua Lenhert
 4/20 Karen Marker
 4/21 Desten Broach
 4/21 Gerald Michaels
 4/22 Steve Goldstein
 4/22 David Thorne
 4/23 Ronald Bachman
 4/23 Peter Laub
 4/23 Tamar Mahru
 4/24 Arlene Saidman
 4/26 Victor Sonenberg
 4/27 Shaun Reid
 4/27 Lawrence Saidman
 4/28 Melissa
 Schwartz-Lindheim
 4/28 Richard Stayman
 4/30 Helene Schwartz

Anniversaries

50 Stephen and Dale Block 4/12
 35 Jim and Becky Eisen 4/21
 25 Neil and Andrea Muchin 4/9
 25 Phil Witte and Rebecca Schnier 4/22
 25 Barry and Kate Augus 4/22
 15 Michelle and David Schorr 4/3
 10 Adam and Amanda Brill 4/10
 5 Jessie and Ethan Ornstein 4/26
 5 Erin and Brandon Maslan 4/26

Welcome New Members

Allia Calkins and Kyle DeLand
 Sam Ferguson and Vasudha Talla, Leela,
 Simon
 Linda Posner
 Juliette Wallack and Dave Metz, Paxton
 Justin Zucker and Sarah Threlfall, Brianna

Mazel Tov!

Peter Farny Saper
 was born to Daniel and Jill Saper
 on February 8, 2020

B'nei Mitzvah

April B'nei Mitzvah ceremonies are being
 rescheduled.

*Birthdays and anniversaries are listed in
 multiples of 5 as well as birthdays age 80
 and over. Mazel Tov!*

REMEMBRANCES

We mourn the loss of:

Ann Bry Stein

Mother of Bob Stein

Martin Cohen

Brother of Charmian Cohen

Selma Manheim Firestone

Mother of Sydney Firestone Schimmel

Marjorie Starr Myers

Mother of Manny Myers

Louis G. Weisberg

Uncle of Burt Boltuch

Howard Shabsis

Uncle of Stephen Fox

**May their memories
 be a blessing.**



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Purim 2020

Thank you to all of our Spielers and musicians for a wonderful performance of “The Megilly’s”! Special thanks to script writer and Music Director Lucy Harris, Director Jackie Berkman, and Assistant Director Teddy Mates-Muchin. It was a fabulous spiel!

Thank you to the seventeen members of the Temple Sinai Bakers Guild (you know who you are) and SiTY (Sinai Temple Youth) for making so many delicious hamantashen for our carnival and spiel. It really would not have been Purim without you!

